

The Moonlit Picnic

HOST GUIDE - CONTAINS ANSWERS

Keep this page away from the players. A small-group activity with an adult reader.



1. Prepare the table

Print the two player pages in the size that matches your paper. Cut out the three cards and invitation. Put cards in envelopes labelled 1, 2 and 3. Write 314 inside the invitation, then fold it or place it in an envelope labelled Invitation. Set out the code sheet and a pencil. No physical lock or timer is needed.

2. Read the opening story

"The moonlit picnic is nearly ready, but the invitation is behind a three-number lock. The gardener left three cards. Card 1 gives the first number, card 2 the second, and card 3 the third. Every answer needs a reason. Can we recover the invitation?"

3. Let the group investigate

Give the group all three numbered envelopes. They can solve in any order, but record answers in order from 1 to 3. Read the cards aloud when needed. Give different children a turn to inspect, count, write or explain. Nobody needs to be shut in a room.

4. Check the code: 314

CARD 1 - 3

There are three stars. The circle and triangle do not count.

Hints: "Which shapes are stars?" Then: "Touch each star once while you count."

CARD 2 - 1

Only key 1 has both a round top and stripes. Key 2 is triangular; key 3 has dots.

Hints: "Check the top first." Then: "Which round key also has stripes?"

CARD 3 - 4

The sequence counts forward by one: 2, 3, 4, 5.

Hints: "Say the numbers from two to five." Then point to the gap.

5. Reveal the invitation

Ask the players to explain how each digit follows from its card. When the reasons fit, open the invitation together and read the ending. If someone is frustrated, solve one card together and let them lead the next decision.

Optional adaptations

Easier: name the shapes aloud, read the two key requirements separately, or put numbered scraps beside card 3. Harder: replace card 3 with "A = 1, B = 2, C = 3, D = 4. Move one letter forward from C, then use that letter's number." The answer remains 4.